

ADDRESS

BY HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN M. KAPENA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS.

On the Occasion of Laying the Corner Stone of the New Royal Palace, Honolulu, December 31, 1879.

Your Majesties, Chiefs and the People:

It has pleased His Majesty the King to direct His Honor the Chief Justice and myself to make some remarks respecting the solemn and important ceremony of to-day. We are gathered here together this morning to assist in laying the corner stone of the new home for the Kings of Hawaii nei. The project has been for several years under consideration, and at the last session of the Legislature an appropriation was made for commencing this work. His Majesty the King has decided that the Palace should be erected on this spot, sacred to the memories which cluster about it of his Royal predecessors now passed away.

The ancient Chiefs were remarkable for their fondness of travelling from one part of the Islands to another, thereby evincing a spirit of enterprise and cultivating a talent for government. This was strikingly illustrated in Kamehameha himself, who when he found that by his own bravery and indomitable will he had become master of the larger portion of the Island of Hawaii, he immediately left his home in fertile Kailua, and removed to the barren, sun-dried sea-beach of Kawaihewa. At first glance, this would seem a strange proceeding on the part of the King, but it was only an evidence of his superior wisdom. He collected about him the captured chiefs, his own immediate warriors and his wise councillors, and kept them continually with him, all depending upon the King for their food and other necessities of life, which came from his own storehouses, and were divided among them under his own supervision. By this proceeding the chiefs became entirely dependent upon Kamehameha; moreover, it was rendered entirely impossible to carry on any conspiracy or rebellious movement, for they had no means of their own to feed or support any of their adherents. Under these circumstances, the King's wise men and councillors advised him to erect the temple of Puukohala, at Kawaihewa, Hawaii, as a means of entrapping Keoua, the King's last contestant for supreme power, who was also a relation of his. Thus came about the downfall of Keoua, the possession and complete triumph of Kamehameha over the entire Island of Hawaii.

Subsequent to this event, the seat of Government was removed to the Island of Maui. The policy of removing the seat of Government to the place recently conquered was a wise one. For if we will consider the traditional history of the conquest of the country, we shall perceive that in the places last conquered the chiefs and the court were always retained together; and we shall understand that the great reason of this policy was to render the people of the conquered provinces quiet and contented with their condition under their new chiefs, whom they were thus brought to recognize as their undoubted conquerors.

At Lahaina the seat of Government was at first attempted to be established by the chiefs, and the Court to be retained at that place, and in consequence of which the Hale Puia was erected as a palace, but which in after years became a court-house and continued such up to the time of its demolition. Another reason which has forcibly impressed upon my mind the belief that the chiefs intended to settle themselves permanently at Lahaina, is the fact, that at that place they first commenced an actual system of government by defining the different departments; there was also convened the first Legislature that ever existed in Hawaii nei, which at that sitting produced the now celebrated Blue Laws of Lualaba.

But as it was too often the case with the hopes and aspirations of the sons of men, the fixed intentions of the chiefs were doomed to disappointment. The seat of Government was withdrawn from Lahaina to Oahu, owing to the importance of the harbor of Honolulu, its central position in the group, and subsequently the large increase of the population of this city. The advice and persuasions of the principal chiefs and councillors induced King Kamehameha III, styled Kamehameha III, to remove the Government to Oahu in the year 1843, and he took up his residence in the beautiful Episcopal Church. Subsequently, in the month of July, A. D. 1844, Kamehameha commenced to erect the building recently demolished, known at that time by the name of Hanalei. It has been said that in olden times a large heiau or temple extended to this spot, the name of which was Kauhaimanui. The house was erected for the Princess Victoria Kaiulani, but Kamehameha III took possession of it as a palace, and from that time it was the home for the Kings of Hawaii nei. At the time when Kamehameha erected the old palace, the grounds were not so spacious as they are at present. On the western corner was Kamehameha's house, which he had named Hanalei; and subsequently he commenced to erect a large stone house, the walls of which only appeared above ground, and afterwards vanished into thin air, when the stones composing them were sold by his son, the late Kamehameha V.

There, in the premises known as Pohukaina, Kamehameha III, the Premier erected her house. When John Young was Premier, he built and lived in Kinan Hale. There, in that house Hoihoikea, were transacted some of the most important affairs connected with the history of Hawaii and of the Hawaiian race;—there lived and died Kamehameha III, and within its walls were held many an important council to decide the interests of this nation, their advancement and their prosperity. The name Hoihoikea was in commemoration of the restoration of the sovereignty and the flag of Hawaii nei by Admiral Thomas. During the reign of Kamehameha V, Cabinet councils were frequently held there. There was held the council which called the Constitutional Convention, the result of which was the abrogation of the Constitution of 1852 and the promulgation of the present one. There Kamehameha V, he of the strong mind, humbly succumbed to his fate, and thus passed away the last of the Kamehameha dynasty. In that house also the present reigning family met with their first great grief, and far distant be the day when they shall be called to mourn another void in the family.

There, in the premises of Pohukaina, was erected the tomb of the departed chiefs, and at the entrance of that sacred place was placed the body of John Young, one of Kamehameha's intimate friends. In order that the spot may not be forgotten where that tomb once stood, the King has caused a mound to be raised there, crowned with ferns and flowers in memory of those who sleep beneath it.

Doubtless the memory is yet green of that never-to-be-forgotten night when the remains of the departed chiefs were removed to the Royal Mausoleum in the valley. Perhaps the world had never witnessed a procession more weird and solemn than that which conveyed the bodies of the chiefs through our streets, accompanied on each side by thousands of people until the mausoleum was reached, the entire scene and procession being lighted by large kukui torches, while the surrounding darkness lent in striking relief the coffins on their biers. Truly we cannot forget the weirdness, the solemnity, and the affecting scene afforded by that strange midnight procession!

The last house that was recently demolished was known on the mauka side as Kauhaimanui, and as Ilikapukalani on the mauka side, erected by Kamehameha IV for his Queen; there they spent most of their time during his reign. Those who had the good fortune to be invited to partake of the gracious hospitalities of the King and Queen will not soon forget the refined and courteous manners of those royal personages. In Ilikapukalani was born their child the Prince of Hawaii. The northern corner of these premises, connecting Richard Street with Palace Walk, has no relation to the history of the chiefs of Hawaii nei, inasmuch as those premises belong to the Sumner family; it was only recently that they were purchased in order to complete the square form of the palace grounds.

The frequenters of these grounds would readily bring to the mind's eye the forms of Judd, Lee, Richards, Wyllie, Armstrong, Robertson and Andrews, in their various positions as public servants and true friends of the Hawaiian people. Even now one can bring to mind the countenances of the departed chiefs, who strongly upheld the hands of our foreign fellow counsellors. After Kamehameha the

Second came Kekuanihiki and John Young, and now I fancy I can see coming up these paths with firm tread the stately forms of Pahi and Kekunaoa. Here also comes the jovial and pleasing countenance of Kapaneke, than whom none excelled in the qualities of caution and modesty in giving advice to his King, exceeding in this respect his care for his own affairs. Now before the mind's eye the stooping form of John II; and amongst those who served and labored for the good of the country and the progress of the nation, we cannot forget Hualiohi, Keliiahonui, Namakaea, Kaeo, and Kanania. Of the servants of the Government and the people who are now living, it is not fitting to speak on this occasion, for the web of their history is not yet woven, nor are their labors finished.

Standing upon this spot this morning, our thoughts revert to the chiefs and counsellors who have departed before; and some remarks are suggested in regard to events of the past regime as compared with those of the present. Should any one consider that it is a light and easy task to conduct the affairs of our Island Government, he will be greatly mistaken, for evidently it will require all the skill, the watchful care, the patience, the caution and the industry that can be bestowed in the future, in order to secure the well-being of the people and the prosperity of the Government.

The pleasant memories of my youth about this city of ours are still fresh. When the palace which once stood on this spot was built, this was a treeless plain, covered with creeping thorns, sparsely dotted with grass houses, among which would now grow, formed by the banks of two patches. Now, as we look about on all sides, all these things are changed; it would seem as if the blood and verdure of the valleys had been transplanted hither,—the handsome white residences, the churches and the hospitals,—the water brought down from its mountain hiding-place to the innermost homes of the people,—the whirl of the wheels of vehicles of all descriptions along our streets,—the clangor of hammers in the various haunts of industry,—the construction of telegraphic wires and the telephone, carrying with the speed of lightning our spoken words. Looking towards the harbor, there thirty years ago there was but one wharf, that of James Robinson, whereas to-day the water frontage is nearly all occupied with wharves, while the once quiet surface of the harbor is now disturbed by the movements of the numerous coasters, merchant and whaling vessels of war, our inter-island steamers, and the periodical calls of the huge mail steamers.

Our commerce twenty-five years ago was next to nothing as compared with the present time; for in those days our commerce depended upon the visits of the whaling ships; we produced nothing of importance for export, except such articles as we might be able to trade with them during winter months and a small portion of the spring; but during the long summer months we saw no more of these customers. In the year 1853, the total value of all our exports amounted to the sum of \$148,685.76; and in the year 1878, the value of our exports reached the sum of \$3,247,879.49. Not only this, but we must consider the wages earned by the people. Formerly twenty-five cents per diem were considered high wages for a laborer, but now he demands as high as two dollars or more for a single day's work.

It is not however in this city alone that we find evidences of the changed condition of the people and the country. Let us turn our eyes to the windward islands and examine their condition. A hundred years ago, those islands were noted as being the theatres of war for their fearless braves, with their spears and javelins, where apparently the only use of the common people was to help their chiefs in their warlike pursuits, to implicitly obey, to trust to and to love their chiefs.

But in these days, on those plains where once the flying spear and swift javelin were familiar objects, a great war of a different character is going forward on most of the fertile portions of the country. In the far distant past it was the fierce tread of armed men on their marches and in their combats that filled the air with the dust of their movements; but in these days it is the untiring point of the plow that industriously stirs up the dry soil which has so long lain fallow,—the steam whistle echoes far and near, arousing the idle to join hands with the industrious, that both may work together for progress. Fifty years ago, if a prophet had arisen who should have foretold that the wilderness of Kohala, Hamakua and Iliho and the barrenness of Kau should be cultivated,—that the rushing streams of precipitous Koolan on Maui that then ran to waste in the ocean should be diverted to fertilize the broad plains of Kulaokamaoia,—that the first telephone should be constructed between Waikuku and Haiku,—that the first race of the iron horse should be from Hamakua to the rise of Nehe,—that Honolulu should witness the prosecution of so many industrial pursuits and the erection of schools and churches,—that the bulrushes of the swamps of Ewa and Waikiki should be swept away by the agriculture of a foreign race,—that the gushing streams of Kanai, famed in song, should be made to serve in fertilizing the land and doing the work of man,—what should we have thought of such a prophet? We should have pronounced him a visionary or a madman.

But in the past fifty years, during which we have enjoyed the benefits of an enlightened civilization, many and great changes have taken place, affording a noble contrast to the times of our forefathers. To-day, every man is a freeman, our laws protect equally the person, the life and the property of every man, secure from injury or spoil. In these last years we have received a generous national concession, which must encourage and consolidate our agricultural interests, giving new life to the land. And thus, as the country grows in wealth and the Government in its ability to serve the people, in like generous manner and proportion may we provide a home for the Kings of Hawaii!

For myself, being a member of the Masonic Fraternity, I am reminded of the Sovereigns of this Kingdom who have become members of the same and have devoted their energies to forwarding the interests of that benevolent Order, whose object is to combine all good men in one sacred bond of brotherhood. To-day the honorable duty has devolved upon that Order of laying the corner-stone of the Royal Palace here to be erected; so also was awarded to that Order the honor of laying the foundations of the world-renowned Temple of Jerusalem.

Three of the crowned heads of this Kingdom were members of this Order, as was also the late lamented Prince Leloechoku. The corner-stones of all our principal public buildings have been laid by the Order of Freemasons.

Kamehameha IV,—one of the wisest of our Kings, and whose reign shed a lustre upon the throne of Hawaii nei,—laid the corner-stone of the Sailors' Home and of the Queen's Hospital.

Kamehameha V, the King of indomitable will and undaunted men, laid the corner-stone of our much admired Government building, Aliioli Hale.

We are now in the reign of Kalakaua, the only one of these Sovereigns who has ascended all the steps of the craft, and has reached the pinnacle of Masonic honors. It is a matter of surprise as well as of gratification to know that the sentiments and inclinations of our Kings have in this matter tended in one direction,—that of Masonry; so that we may say of them, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment on the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment." And thus it was with the concord of purpose between our Kings.

In our Brotherhood of Masonry each member is taught the symbolical meaning of the three rounds of the ladder which the Patriarch Jacob saw in his dream. These are, Faith, Hope and Charity.

I need hardly apologise to the craft assembled here to-day for comparing these three great rounds with the peculiar characteristics of the Sovereigns of this Kingdom who have been members of the royal craft—Kamehameha IV as Faith, Kamehameha V as Hope, and his present Majesty as Charity.

For Ilihoikea (Kamehameha IV) believed that the people might be saved by curing their diseases,—as witness his exertions in procuring the erection of the Queen's Hospital, a proof of his Faith.

Kapuniwa (Kamehameha V) was hopeful for the perpetuity of Hawaiian independence. The stately Government House, with its enduring walls, stands before you as a proof that his leading sentiment was Hope.

To his present Majesty we apply the title of Charity. It

was the noblest of charity, springing from an earnest desire for the prosperity of his people, that induced him to leave his Kingdom and to brave the wintry cold of the Rocky Mountains and to face the icy sleet of the world-renowned cataract of Niagara, with the only object in view of securing to his people the boon of Reciprocity. And we have all observed how he and his Queen have labored in all weathers throughout the Islands for the welfare of the people. In the words of Paul to the Corinthians, I may say, "And now abideth these three, Faith, Hope and Charity; but the greatest of these is Charity." In the words of our Order, "For our Faith may be lost in sight; Hope ends in fruition; but Charity extends beyond the grave through the boundless realms of eternity!"

And now, as we are gathered upon this spot, sacred to the memory of chiefs and kings who have departed, together we have laid this corner-stone of a new home for the Kings of Hawaii nei. Our earnest desire, our prayer and our hope, is that our Gracious King shall be granted long life,—to his family peace, health and honors; and for the nation and the Government, continued progress and prosperity to the end of time!

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